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## EARLY LATIN PROSODY.

BY J. B. GREENOUGH.

THE profound researches of Müller and others in early Latin prosody have only served to settle the metrical conditions under which certain long syllables are shortened. They have done nothing, systematic at least, to show how the shortening was accomplished. In fact, Corssen's treatment, and perhaps something of Wagner on the Aulularia, are practically the only discussions that have had that end in view. That their theories as well as those of the ancient grammarians are unsound, at least in the form in which they are stated, seems obvious. They all proceed upon the idea that every consonant had half a *χρόνος* (*mora*), so that a short vowel, having one *mora*, with two consonants, each having a half, makes two *morae* or a long syllable. This is nothing but a mechanical interpretation of the usage of the later poets, and seems obviously absurd. It mistakes the whole nature of position, as I hope to show later. The effect of position could not possibly be explained on any such mechanical theory as this. It seems clear enough that the early Latin poets, in fitting a dramatic text—that is, a body of Latin conversation—to definite forms of Greek metre, must have followed pretty closely the spoken language of their day. That is what all poets do, except so far as they are ruled by conventional forms previously established, such as that which in English allows *said* to rhyme with *blade*. There could hardly have been any such conventions in the time of the early Latin poetry. The text of the plays is the text of speech, and must have been recognizable as such by the hearers. But the poet has two privileges; he may, in the first place, choose either one of two varieties of speech, which are current in the ever-changing fashions of enunciation, that suits his purpose. The poet can say, for instance, either *peremptory* or *péremptōry*. So the Latin poet could say *omnibus* or *omnibu'*, according to the quantity which he wanted. In the second place,

he may force words slightly, according to the exigencies of his metre, if he does not go so far as to make them unintelligible. Thus I am at liberty to make *real*, *prayer*, and *fire* two syllables, or *heaven* one, because those forms are near enough to the common speech to be felt as not distorted. These two kinds of liberties are just what the Latin poet took with his text; farther than this it seems impossible that he should have gone. Hence, in discussing the subject, our view must be made to conform to the possibilities at least of contemporaneous speech, and should make the usages of speech, and not the mechanical rules, the criterion.

On this line I propose to examine what happened when, according to the metrical rules established beyond controversy, Plautus or any other early poet shortened (as we say) a syllable which in the later language, and often in his own works, elsewhere, was treated as long.

In the case of vowels long by nature, there is no difficulty; some part of a homogeneous quantity can easily be retrenched. But what happened in the case of syllables ordinarily long by position? To answer this question, we must determine what lengthening by position really was. As I intimated above, the idea that a consonant has a definite vocal length, is evidently absurd. The explosives certainly have no metrical duration; the fricatives may or may not have. They may be treated as explosives, or they may be metrically continued; but there is no indication that they were so continued in Latin.

I might, perhaps, except the vowels before *ns*, *nf*, and *gn*, in which the lengthening seems to have been due to a prolongation of the following consonant; but these exceptions rest on other principles and make no difference.

So, in order to understand what position is, it is necessary to review the exact nature of articulation. We ordinarily think of letters or sounds as distinct entities, which are put together to make words, each having a separate value in time. This is not strictly true. Very few of the letters are capable of being pronounced alone; and, where they are so capable, they are in actual speech so interlocked that one is not added to another, but dovetailed into it. Let us examine a mute, for instance. It consists of two parts—

first, a stoppage of a previously existing stream of breath by an arrangement of the organs which is characteristic for each letter (*an implosion*) ; second, a loosening of this stop (*an explosion*). A fricative or continuous consonant has the same two parts produced in the same manner, except that the stoppage is not complete, but so loose as to allow the breath to escape during the time of the stop. But the putting on and taking off of the stop, or the beginning and cessation of the breath, or in some cases the occurrence of another stop, answer the same purpose as the implosion and explosion of the mutes.

So much for a single element of speech. But the elements essentially never occur alone ; two or more are always practically connected together. In the case of a mute, it is preceded or followed (sometimes both) by some other sound. If this accompanying sound is a continuous one, as a vowel or continuous (fricative) consonant, the closure (or implosion) is so adjusted that it becomes the end of the previous stream of breath (either pure or fricative). Thus the implosion, which would otherwise be the end of an unformed stream of breath, becomes, in case of a fricative, the end of the fricative consonant ; and, in case of a vowel, the end of the vowel. This implosion may be immediately followed by an explosion without any other character than that given by the mute itself, as in *fat* ; in this case, we have the end of a word or sound-group. Or, on the other hand, the explosion may be modified, as the implosion was, by some formation of the vocal organs which is suited to produce some other sound, as in *fatness* ; in this case, the explosion *is* the *n*-sound. It is not followed by it, but the same stream that rushes out makes the *n*. If, however, the following sound is itself a mute, the position of the closure is so changed at or after the instant of implosion, that the explosion is that of the new mute, and not that of the first one. The same statements are true of sounds other than mutes, except that in these the closure is only partial, so that the stream does not strictly explode, but is only diverted. But as the diversion must consist of some opening and shutting (usually simultaneous), the effect of an explosion is produced, although the stream does not, strictly speaking, stop, unless we purposely repress the breath, as we can always do. It will be observed

that all this is or may be continuous, so that there really need be no syllabification except through a new voluntary impulse of breath. Thus, in such a word as *strength*, we may (and usually do) make it felt as only one syllable, but we also may (but do not) make it consist of two, or even six. We may mark by a new impulse (often a mere increase) of diaphragmatic contraction either element of the compound sound which we usually pronounce with one impulse; thus we can say, *s-trength*, *st-rength*, *str-ength*, *stre-ngth*, *streng-th*, and children in their early efforts often do thus divide syllables. In fact this word really has two syllables, though the first, consisting of *s* alone, is not felt to be a syllable according to our (conventional) division.

In regard to doubled consonants, — that is, two consonants of the same kind, — nobody ordinarily really pronounces them in English except in two successive words. We can say, *the rat turned on the cat*, in which case the first *t* has an implosion and a neutral (if I may call it so) explosion — a dull vowel sound; but we (in English) are not likely to make it, unless we have some special occasion to pause between the words. We usually connect the two words more closely. If we pause at all, instead of finishing the first *t* with an explosion, we dwell an instant after the implosion in the stopped position, and then explode on the next sonant, whatever that may be (here the *ur*). This is what the Italian does habitually whenever a doubled consonant presents itself; in English, we do not do it in a single word, though we usually do it between two words. It is unquestionable that the Romans did the same thing with two consonants in the same word as do the Italians. We say *a-tain* (for *attain*), but the Romans said *at-tinet*, as the Italians say *tut-ti*. Now it was just this pause between the explosion and the implosion that made position. In fact, if we consider what I have said before, this was the only possible thing that could make it.

So quantity by position is really a matter of syllabification, connected with this pause of which I have spoken. It depends upon a method of dividing syllables which, to the English ear, is essentially unfamiliar. I discovered this many years ago, when I happened for the first time to hear, under circumstances that made a lasting impression, an Italian enunciation. The word *detes-to* in

*Lucretia Borgia* remained in my ear, so that, when later I began to ask what position meant, this articulation presented itself as the answer. I suppose that now this doctrine is generally received, but I doubt whether many persons have so worked it into their views of phonetics that they understand all its effects and corollaries. This true nature of position shows itself in several different phenomena of ancient prosody. The first is the prosodical effect of a mute and a liquid. Why was a syllable with this combination common? It is evident that it was because two forms of enunciation were possible and customary. A Roman could make the first syllable of *patri*s either long or short. An Englishman cannot, without bad pronunciation, do the same with *patrimony*. Why not? Evidently because we do not mark the division of syllables forcibly enough to be conscious of any difference between *pa-tris* and *patri*s; but in Italian the difference is marked with absolute certainty. The only possible explanation is that the Roman enunciation was like the Italian, and in fact like that of all the other Mediterranean nations. A Roman could say *pa-tris*, in which case the syllable was short; or he could say *patri*s, in which case the marked stop between the two consonants, *i.e.*, the fact that the *t* did not explode immediately into the *r*, but was retained a perceptible instant, made the syllable long. In Plautus's time they always said *pa-tris*, and consequently a mute and liquid never lengthened a syllable otherwise short.

Another plain indication of the nature of position is found in the fact that the ancient grammarians were troubled by the *u* following *q* or *g*. This letter could not be a vowel, because it did not make a new syllable; nor could it be a consonant, because it did not make position. They did not know the true nature of position, and of course they went wrong. But their error shows that when the *u* was a part of the syllable begun by the *q* or the *g*, as we have seen it may well be, it of course did not make position. A *u* COULD make position if it began a new syllable, as in *egressus vada*; but if it was in the same syllable, as in *male suada*, it did not.

It is in the light of this doctrine I have set forth that the early Latin prosody by position is here to be discussed; and my idea roughly stated is that when the early Romans pronounced as we do, position disappeared, but when they pronounced as the modern

Italians do, there was position. This, of course, is a very crude statement, and to maintain it we must examine the cases in detail. Essentially, all the cases of shortening depend on one general principle. The Romans of the period in question had a dislike (we may call it) to a succession of sounds in dissyllables, in which a short accented syllable was followed by a long accented one. They could have (in speech, I mean) dissyllables like *lǎ lǎ*, *lǎ lā*, or *lǎ lǎ*, but not *lǎ lā*. The other, *lǎ lǎ*, they did not have by their laws of accent. We may compare the odd sound of the syncopated measure in waltz-time, as it is often used for variety *lǎ lā | lǎ lā*. It seems to us an unnatural movement, and we feel relieved when the regular cadence is restored. So the Romans evidently felt, and, therefore, they began to say *dǒmĭ*, instead of *dǒmī* and the like. Many words got a permanent slant in this direction, like *cave*, *vale*, *vide*, *puta*, though in general the proper quantity was afterwards restored, at least in poetry. This feeling also extended to two monosyllables in connected discourse, to the first syllable of a longer word when it followed a monosyllable, and also to any two syllables preceding the accent in a four-syllable word. Such a shortened syllable has never either word-accent or ictus, except in a few cases at the beginning of a verse. That the shortening is analogous to the clipping of words in lively, strongly-accented and rapid utterance, seems sufficiently obvious. The question is to know just what elements, if any, disappeared in utterance; or, where none absolutely disappeared, what method of pronunciation destroyed the effect of position. The principle laid down by Corsen, that what was written by the people was also spoken, and that we are not authorized to omit any sound which was represented at the time in question by written characters, is, in the main, correct, but has undoubtedly some exceptions, which we shall note as we proceed.

From what has been said, it is not to be expected that any one principle should explain the details of all cases. It is of the nature of such shortenings, under the influence of accent and hurried speech, that each combination of sounds should follow its own laws. The change is not an intended nor a conscious one, and the sounds adjust themselves to the convenience of the organs.

Without going over the whole of Plautus, I have got together all the combinations (so to speak) in which position is neglected, from Müller's *Plautinische Prosodie*. As he gives all suggested readings which involve the principle, together with comments, and on a plan entirely distinct from the one I have in mind, his collection seems sufficient for the purpose. To these I have added the list given by Corssen. In going over these, I hope to provide for all known cases. I assume, of course, that the regular metrical conditions now universally admitted are suitable for the shortening.

*a.* The first case is the recognized inscriptional suppression of *s* after a short vowel. This needs no example nor comment.

*b.* This principle will apply without forcing to a long vowel as well, when that vowel is shortened by the Iambic rule, as *fōrās sum egressus, sī te hābēs cārum, hābēs quod fācias, adferre iūbēs lorīcam, vīrīs cum sūmmis*. Only about five or six are noted, but probably more could be found.

*c.* The next usage that is confirmed by inscriptions is the suppression of final *m*: *bōnūm sodalem, decēm sī ad cenam, enīm verō* (and *enīm vēro*) very often; so *malum, quidem*, and many others. In these two cases the letter simply disappeared.

*d.* (1) Less supported by documents is the loss of *t* at the end of the third persons singular and plural of verbs. There is only one word (in these places) showing this loss before the second Punic war, and that word is evidently dialectic: *dede* (Lanuvium and Pisaurum), while the city inscriptions show the *t* preserved. The loss of *t* in the third plural of the perfect, found along with the full form, is proved by official inscriptions of that age: *dedro* (Pisaurum), *censuere* (Sen. Con. de Bacch.). The Pompeian graffiti show the loss of the *t* in several places. Thus *quisquis ama perea*, etc., shows that this writer at least did not hear the *t* at the end of the word, though other people did. We may add to this the fact that the loss is universal in the Umbrian, Volscan, Sabellian, and Faliscan. The loss is common also in late Latin. This seems to show that there must have been a tendency to drop the *t*, or at least assimilate it, constantly increasing among the common people, till it finally crowded out



the *t* altogether, except in special cases before a vowel, in the Romance languages. And here comes in a limitation of the dictum of Corssen above set forth. Writing does represent speech, but it does not always represent the real speech of the writer, and certainly not the contemporaneous speech of other persons. A man who can write at all, is always influenced in his writing by the written copies which he has followed. Take such an expression as *good-bye*. Unless we examine very carefully, we imagine that we say the words in the form in which we know them to exist. We know the word is *good*, and we think we say it so; but, as a fact, very few persons do say it so without an effort. We vary between *good-bye*, *goob-býe*, and *guh-bý*. We may suppose the Roman did the same with *habet*. He knew that it ended in the consonant sound, because he usually said it last, with no occasion to clip it, and would write *habet cor*; but he would no doubt read it *habecor*, unless he had the careful Italian articulation, on which, as I have said before, I conceive position to depend.

(2) This usage in verbs applies also to *est*, which (in composition) is one of the commonest words to be shortened. In our speech, *hoc est corpus* becomes *hocs-córpus*, and, given the shortening, which nobody doubts, this enunciation seems the most natural, and in fact the only way to effect it. The Roman could say *hoc ést corpús* if his metre or his emphasis required it, and then we should have position; but he could also — and the common people doubtless did, more or less — say the other, and there would be none. Cf. the famous *cauneas* for the character of their speech. No better proof, for the possibility at least, of this can be found than in *atque* becoming *ac*. So we have *agĭt grátĭás, amăt ne, decĕt servom, dedĭt dono, agĭnt cĕteri, amĕnt Pseudole, abĕst perdito, adĕst benignitas, potĕst quin*. In these cases, when the *t* was lost, the other principles that I shall discuss later would come in to apply to the remaining consonants, as *agun(t) ceteri, abes-(t) perdito*. This is one of the commonest usages, occurring everywhere. Under this same principle may come a very few common words like *caput, apud, id, ad, at, et*, which are often found shortened.

*e.* Doubled consonants can at any time be treated as single ones. As is well known, the writing of doubled consonants came in only

in the time of Ennius. Of course, it does not follow that because only one was written that two were not pronounced; in fact, it is certain that they were usually pronounced double. Now what is a doubled consonant? It is not in any language that I know strictly a doubled one, as I have shown. We can pronounce two, as we do in *rat-trap*; but our usual way, even where two seem to be present, is to pronounce the implosion of one and the explosion of the other. And so also in other languages.

In the case of a single consonant the explosion follows immediately on the implosion, without any delay between; this is our English method of pronouncing what we call doubled consonants, except in such words as *rat-trap*, — we only pronounce one in fact. In the case of a real doubled consonant, an appreciable stop between the implosion and the explosion is made; this is the Italian method of pronouncing two like consonants. In view of what was said before, it is evident that the factor which makes position is the pause between the implosion and the explosion. A Roman, in order to make position, must have pronounced his two consonants in the Italian manner.

We have no direct evidence that the Romans neglected this pause, but such forms as *operio*, *aperio*, *oportet*, show that doubled consonants must very early have given place in certain cases to single ones, so that the phenomenon of reducing the two to one could not have been absolutely strange to the language. And, again, this seems the most natural, or rather the only possible way of accomplishing the purpose. This class is extremely numerous. Examples are *in occultó iacebis*, *per opprèssionem*, *ea ádfinitatem*, *sávia mámillæ*, *égo ésse nolo*.

*f.* Closely connected with the last usage is the tendency of final consonants by the universal laws of *Sandhi* to become assimilated to the following initial. Monumental evidence of this tendency is not extensive, but seems sufficient, as *at tegulas*, C. I. L., I, 252; *quic quid*, C. I. L., I, 200; *apsolvere*, C. I. L., I, 603. So Cicero's *cun nobis*, and *etian nunc*, Velius Longus, p. 22, 36, etc.; so also *occido*, *occasio*, found very early.

In cases of entire assimilation, the assimilated doubled consonants would naturally be treated like original ones: *ad foris* (*afforis*,

*ă-foris*), *ut contingat* (*ucontingat*, *u-contingat*), *ăd tris viros*, *eho ăn lăbera*.

g. Thus far, all the cases of shortening imply loss; but, if I am right in my definition of the real nature of position, there are many cases in which no loss would be required to prevent the effect of position by two consonants. As we have seen, even an Augustan poet could say *sentētia scripto* in dactylic verse, which shows that there was no potent charm about two consonants, or three for that matter.

This effect (or rather non-effect) of two consonants in a following word is enough to show clearly that a Roman in Plautus's time, probably at any time, *could* pronounce consonants either in the Italian way or in the English way. He could say *detes-to*, or he could say *dete-sto*. In the first case there would be position, and in the second case there would be none. Now we know that in Plautus we find that sometimes the second syllable of *magistratus* was long, and sometimes it was short. I see no more natural way of making this variety — almost no other way at all — than the one plainly indicated in *telā scandite* and *sententiā scripto* respectively; that is, at one time it was *magis-tratus*, at another *magi-stratus*.

This principle (of possible initials) applies to a very considerable number of cases. Among the various combinations occurring, to which this treatment seems applicable, *i.e.*, those in which we have no reason at all to suspect assimilation and consequent loss, or those in which assimilation or loss seems doubtful, we have various degrees of certainty. The combinations *st* (including *str*), *sp* (including *spr*), *sc* (including *sq*, *scr*, and *scī*), *dv* and *gn*, as being found beginning Latin words, hardly need any comment. The Romans could and did pronounce them as beginning a syllable, and even in later poetry, when so beginning a following word, they are found without position.

With hardly a less degree of certainty, we may assume *pt*, *ps*, and *x*, as being found beginning Greek words used by Plautus, as *Pterelas*, *Pseudolus*, *xystilis*. With *pt* thus established, we may group *bt*, which would inevitably become *pt*, and with much probability *bd*, as being of the same sort and a regular Greek initial group. The

combination *ts* may be tolerably well supported by *z*, which is found in *zona* and the like; but it is perhaps better to assume, as more consonant with Latin usage, assimilation and loss (*ts*, *ss*, *s*). The combinations *mn*, *dm*, *cm*, *sm*, *sn*, though evidently harsh to Roman ears, really come under the mute and liquid rule; and, in view of the fact that such shortenings are incontestable, we may assume that, just as a Frenchman in the opera-bouffe makes his words fit his music in *utterance*,—not by any rule,—so the Roman histrio made these combinations without position when the metre required it. And, if I am right in the view of position above expressed, the only way this could be done was by making these combinations begin a syllable with such slurring (in this case of the first element) as was necessary. And it is to be noticed here that what a man thinks he hears or speaks in ordinary language, is not a safe guide to the actual utterance. Few of our British friends would recognize the *h*-less and *r*-less character of their speech. But the main thing is that a consonant has or has not in speech its distinct ‘syllabic’ utterance, whether we notice it (and so write it) or not. As I have tried to show above, in pronouncing combinations of consonant elements, the organs do not work by machinery with separate clicks at determined intervals, but continuously, so that after the implosion of a mute or the beginning of a fricative the position for the next sound is already preparing. Let any one try to pronounce *acme*, and notice what goes on in his organs of speech. He will find that before the *k*-sound explodes, the nasal position for the *m* is already formed, so that when the explosion comes, it is not a pure *k*-explosion, but is an explosive *m*. The explosion of the *k* is the *m*, and does not precede it. The difference between the Italian method of pronunciation and the English is that the same pause that I have spoken of in regard to doubled consonants is made between the *k*-implosion and the *m*-explosion. What I have called a syllabic utterance requires that there shall be this perceptible pause between the two. That this was the usual later pronunciation of the Romans there can be no doubt; but it is equally clear that they could use the other, from their use of *cŷenus* with its first syllable short, and also from the proper names *Gnaeus* and *Mnestheus*.

The only combinations that do not come under this principle that I can find, are *cp* in *Quid hic Pamphilus*, and *bst* in *abstineo*, etc. These almost necessarily require a sacrifice of one of the elements. The second is justified by *ostendo*, where the *b* is lost and the combination brought into line with the natural Latin initials. For the first I have no suggestion, except that of possible loss of *c*. The cases are few, but too numerous to be emended out.

*h.* There is another class of cases of an entirely different character from those above set forth. One of the commonest cases of neglect of position is that in which a liquid *l, m, n, r*, precedes instead of following the mute. The tendency to shortening is so strong in this case that a few common words, such as *inde, unde, nempe*, are subject to it outside the Iambic rule. These special cases seem so nearly parallel to the use with *ille, ipse, iste*, especially from the fact that these also begin the verse, thus shortening the first syllable instead of the second, that one is tempted to try the same principle with these; that is, either make the combinations begin the syllable, or, second, suppress one consonant. But we have hardly any reason to suspect loss, and though some of the combinations are initial in some languages, there is no indication that they or any of them were so in Latin. A more likely supposition is that the liquids were vocalized, *i.e.*, that instead of vowel + liquid the syllable weakened into a sonant vowel. The process would be precisely what happens in English with *heaven, evil*. There are many others in English, but *these* particular ones are noticeable because, in ecclesiastical language, the last syllable has still its full vowel and consonant; but in common speech it is only a liquid vowel. That this was at some time a Latin mode of pronunciation appears from *ager, acer*, which could only get their later form through a sonant vowel (vocalized liquid) stage.

The forms *facul, simul*, also have the appearance of development from such sonant forms. Perhaps *hercle* is also the result of a corruption in the same line. Of course, there are many forms which must have sprung from vocalized liquids in the Indo-European; but we have no indication that such sounds survived till Plautus's time, though there is nothing distinctly to the contrary. Some

forms in which the shortening occurs, seem difficult to pronounce in this manner. *Soror* and *feror* present, to my tongue at least, great difficulty. They *can* be pronounced, however, by practice, and are perhaps not more troublesome than *terror* in English, to which they would be exactly analogous. The other liquids present no difficulty in pronunciation, but we have no proof that such sounds were ever used by the Romans. *Nempe* would have the sound that we give to the same combination in an *imperial theme*; *inde* and *unde* would, however, in this way be confounded. I know of no case of this form of shortening that cannot be thus accounted for, if we had sufficient evidence that this sort of vowel was used in Plautus's time. Thus, *habēnt si, agūnt ceteri*. Here *t* was lost, as in other cases, and then vocalization took place. So *in hānc nōstram, ferēntarius*, etc. In *datū soleas* the *n* might be lost before *s*. The character of many words in which the enclitic *ne* has lost its vowel, and the commonness of this phenomenon, tend somewhat to show a shortening of this kind, *i.e.*, the peculiar form of the syllable shortened, as in *iubēsne me*, shows some peculiar affection analogous to our clipped words, *gōn t' Boston, ĩnt' town, six hits ofū Carter*.

A fourth possibility is that the division of syllables, which, as we have seen above, made position, was neglected. Here again we have the difference between Italian and English pronunciation. In *morto* we notice the same pause between the syllables that we saw in the case of two like consonants; in *mortar* we do not pause. In the latter case there is a continuous flow of sound, and we cannot say whether we divide after the *r* or the *t*. We know there are two syllables, because there are two distinct expulsions or efforts, but which letter belongs to the first, and which to the second, it is impossible to tell, unless we purposely make the division in one place or the other. In order to make position, as we have seen, the Romans must have made the division perceptible. They must have said *opor-tet, feren-tem, facul-tas*. They could no doubt have spoken the words as we do, — we say *important, preventing, insulted*, — and if they did, then position would disappear. The only indication that they ever really did so is found in the instances above, where *scr* at the beginning of a word does not make position.

I have thus tried to account for the different shortenings of position-affected syllables in early Latin. The points I wish to make are these :

1. It is not to be expected in a matter of phonetics that all details should be reducible to one principle. Each combination had its own accommodations, as in our own clipped and adjusted sequences of sounds.

2. That position is syllabic in its nature, depending on the pause between consonants which is connected with a new letting go of the breath.

3. In cases where we have monumental evidence, we may assume whole or partial loss of one of the consonantal elements.<sup>1</sup>

4. In cases of repeated consonants, including assimilated ones, the Italian pause (cf. 2 above) was neglected so that position failed to be effected.

5. In all cases of consonants capable of beginning a syllable (including even Greek combinations) we may assume a syllabification which essentially combined instead of separating the consonants, thus destroying position precisely as in the mute and liquid combination and in the two consonants at the beginning of a word. This principle might often be combined with loss.

6. The case of liquid + consonant I leave undecided, but with the ground cleared for the adoption of either one of the suggested theories ; though my own opinion is in favor of a continuous utterance, as in English. But, in fact, between that and vocalization there is very little difference.

Either of these theories might readily be combined with the loss, which often took place in these cases.

I have only considered the How? The question Why? I will leave to others — a question which is not likely to lack discussion. It seems necessary to refer to some objections that are found in books to such views as I have presented.

C. F. W. Müller (*Plautinische Prosodie*) seems to say in many places that the phonetic discussion of the facts is not only useless,

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<sup>1</sup> This may be combined with shortening of natural length.

but obstructive for the determination of early Latin prosody. This was perhaps true until the *metrical* limitations of the shortening were generally determined; but it seems to me that as soon as that is done the next step is and ought to be to inquire how the shortening is effected. The three questions are *When?* *How?* and *Why?*—and though the *When?* must come first, the others are indispensable for any system that can properly be called science. It cannot be too firmly kept in mind that poetry, especially a form of poetry that appealed to a large and, in general, slightly cultivated audience, must rest on habitual speech. Poetry, in order to be poetry, must be rhythmical to the ear of the hearer, or it is not poetry. However rude we may suppose the ear of the Roman to have been in metrical matters, yet he must, like the rest of the human race, have learned rhythm from the movements of the human body which, ultimately, depend on the heart and the lungs. When rhythm is transferred to speech, it must conform to a quality of speech either natural or acquired. Nobody doubts that Roman speech had from the earliest times long and short syllables in some form or other; and it seems to me perfectly clear that when Greek metres were introduced they must have conformed, or been made to conform, essentially to the natural or at least possible rhythms of speech. One might call my attention to rude broadsides circulated among the ignorant, or songs sung at popular theatres; but even these are felt to conform in the delivery, and even if they were not, they are different from ancient poetry in that they are written by people as ignorant as the hearers themselves. But the writers of the ancient poetry were Greeks essentially, to whom the Greek was quite as familiar as the Latin, and if they forced the Latin into Greek measures, they did it with full knowledge of the rhythm of the Greek. They were perhaps making a compromise between the two languages; but they must have had the Greek constantly in their ears, and where they deviate from it, they must have done so under the influence of Latin speech, not Latin written words. The accommodation must have been made somehow, the only question is *How?*